

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CU-05 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 395

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS BEIRUT 11436

USIAC

STATE FOR NEA/P/BRIGGS AND S/P/OAKLEY, LONDON FOR PISTOR

EO 11652: NA

SUBJ: WASHINGTON VISIT OF AN-NAHAR STAFFER RIAD RAYYES

1. RIAD RAYYES, GULF AFFAIRS EXPERT OF LEADING INDEPENDENT ARABIC/LANGUAGE DAILY AN-NAHAR AND 1966 IV GRANTEE, VISITING WASHINGTON OCT 28-30 IN COMPANY OF AN-NAHAR PUBLISHER GHASSAN TUENI, WHO WILL BE VISITING SEVERAL U S CITIES FOR LECTURES AND BUSINESS--NEW YORK OCT 22-25; CLEVELAND OCT 25-28; WASHINGTON OCT 28-30; SAN FRANCISCO OCT 30 UNTIL TUENI'S DEPARTURE FOR OFFICIALLY-SPONSORED VISIT TO AUSTRALIA.

2. ALTHOUGH TUENI WILL HAVE OWN WASHINGTON SCHEDULE, RAYYES EXTREMELY INTERESTED IN ENGAGING IN OFF-THE-RECORD BACKGROUND DISCUSSION OF CURRENT U S POLICY IN GULF AREA SIMILAR TO DISCUSSION HE HAD IN 1966 WITH AMB DAVIES. RAYYES BELIEVES ON BASIS FREQUENT TRAVELS IN GULF THAT GULF ELITES HAVE INADEQUATE UNDERSTANDING OF CURRENT U S POLICY IN REGION. HE HOPES TO OBTAIN AUTHORITATIVE EXPOSITION OF THIS POLICY WHILE IN WASHINGTON AS UNCLASSIFIED

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AN AID IN HIS WRITING ON GULF. POST HAS GIVEN HIM JIM BRIGGS'

NAME AS POINT OF CONTACT.

3. IO ROSS AND RAPO MALIK AGREE IN ASSESSING RAYYES AS ABSOLUTELY RELIABLE JOURNALIST, EXTREMELY KNOWLEDGEABLE ON GULF AFFAIRS, AND IN RECOMMENDING HE BE RECEIVED AT HIGHEST FEASIBLE LEAVEL OF DEPT. RAYYES MET UNDERSEC SISCO AND ASST SECRETARY ATHERTON IN 1966 AND KNOWS BOB OAKLEY FROM BEIRUT. AN-NAHAR ENJOYS SIGNIFICANT READERSHIP IN GULF AND WOULD THUS BE USEFUL CHANNEL FOR USG VIEWS. ALL PREVIOUS DEALINGS WITH RAYYES HAVE SHOWN HIM TO BE SCRUPULOUS IN OBSERVING ANY AGREED GROUND RULES.

4. FOR LONDON: RAYYES ARRIVING LONDON SEP 26 TO COVER BRITISH ELECTIONS ON WAY TO U S AND PLANS "TO STOP IN FOR A CHAT" WITH PAO PISTOR.
ROSS

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